



2007 Army Birthday Message

Meeting in Philadelphia 232 years ago, the Second Continental Congress created the United States Army. A short thirteen months later, this same Congress drafted and signed the Declaration of Independence. It was clear to our founding fathers that security, especially security guaranteed by a strong and capable Army, was a precondition for successful democracy and freedom.

Like that extraordinary time in America's fledgling democratic history, this remains true today. The Army's role in securing freedom remains paramount.

As we proudly celebrate the United States Army's 232nd Birthday on 14 June 2007, and do so in the midst of a long and challenging war, it is useful to remind ourselves that the Army has always existed to field forces for victory.

From the Battle of Yorktown to Belleau Wood, from D-Day to the Chosin Reservoir, from Vietnam to Iraq and Afghanistan, Soldiers have demonstrated unmatched courage, dedication, and willingness to sacrifice to accomplish any mission. They have served our country with incredible honor and distinction. They understood, as few others have, that our Constitution and the freedom it guarantees are worth fighting for. They have sacrificed their personal comfort and safety to answer a higher calling--service in the cause of freedom, both at home and abroad.

Today's Soldiers symbolize the nobility of selfless service. Today's Soldiers are motivated by an unwavering belief that they will be victorious on the field of battle, because we have fought this way since 1775 and always will. Today's Soldiers are imbued with the Army Values and live the Warrior Ethos:

- I will always place the mission first.
- I will never accept defeat.
- I will never quit.
- I will never leave a fallen comrade.

While the Army has much work ahead of us, it has much to be proud of and to celebrate. God bless each and every one of you and your families, and God bless America. Army Strong!

Kenneth O. Preston
Sergeant Major of the Army

George W. Casey, Jr.
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

Pete Geren
Acting Secretary of the Army